

Media Release

13 September 2018

Industry backs strategy for aged care workforce

Chief Executive Officer of Leading Age Services Australia (LASA) Sean Rooney welcomed Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Ken Wyatt's release of '**A matter of care – a strategy for Australia's aged care workforce**' developed by the Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce's Chair Professor John Pollaers OAM, at Parliament House today.

Mr Rooney said workforce development is of critical importance to the age services industry.

"We have a dedicated and professional workforce of 350,000 who overwhelmingly deliver good quality care 24 hours a day, seven days week, year in year out, in over 3,000 residential care, home care and home support organisations to over 1.3 million older Australians," Mr Rooney said.

"This is something our industry is immensely proud of and something our nation is very grateful for."

This Strategy has presented 14 actions to holistically address the workforce challenges and opportunities arising from Australia's ageing population. It will support the industry to develop and grow our aged care workforce, adding to the social capital of the communities in which they serve.

Priorities include improved training for the aged care workforce, together with improved workforce rewards and a promoting the age services industry as opportunity rich for workers who seek to build a career in the service of others.

Mr Rooney said LASA strongly supports the responses to workforce development and initial and ongoing training of aged care staff.

"We must ensure that the education and training systems for the aged care workforce meet industry and community expectations," Mr Rooney said.

"Essential to this is appropriate resourcing of the sector that reflects the true costs of care and provides the capacity to train and retain quality staff. This means ensuring adequate industry funding and appropriate employee remuneration."

The Aged Care Industry Growth and Research Translation Centre proposed by the Taskforce is a welcome initiative. The Centre will be well-placed to address research priorities, such as identifying optimal models of care that are linked to the aged care standards and determine the workforce skill mix such models require.

Mr Rooney said the future for Australia's aged care workforce is promising, and there are many career opportunities, working in either age services directly, or in the professions and trades that service our industry, where people can be challenged and rewarded, all while making a meaningful difference in people's lives.

"LASA Members are keen to be involved in the design and rollout of the Taskforce's recommended actions to make sure they are practical, relevant and adequately resourced, so as to drive meaningful change," Mr Rooney said.

“It is now time for action to deliver a future fit workforce for our industry. On behalf of LASA we thank Professor Pollaers and the Taskforce for completing this important work and congratulate Minister Ken Wyatt and the Federal Government for driving this vital initiative.”

Contact: **Ashley Oliver 0458 011 009** *ashleyo@lasa.asn.au*